

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANJUL 00132 181641Z

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FM AMEMBASSY BANJUL

TO USINFO IMMEDIATE

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FOR VOA NEWS COVERAGE DESK FROM GRANT BANJUL

STATE FOR AF/P; AF/W

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CORRESPONDENT S REPORT

ROBERT GRANT, BANJUL

GAMBIA INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS

INTRO: THE GAMBIA IS CELEBRATING THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY  
OF ITS INDEPENDENCE. VOA CORRESPONDENT ROBERT GRANT REPORTS  
FROM BANJUL.

TEXT: WHEN PRESIDENT FORD S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE TO GAMBIA S  
CELEBRATIONS MET WITH PRESIDENT DAWDA JAWARA IN BANJUL S STATE  
HOUSE IT MARKED THE MEETING AGAIN OF OLD FRIENDS.

AMBASSADOR DEAN BROWN, DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE, ONE-TIME  
SERVED AS AMBASSADOR TO THE GAMBIA. HE TOLD PRESIDENT JAWARA  
IT WAS GOOD TO BE BACK IN THE COUNTRY, AND HE WAS VERY  
IMPRESSED WITH THE FAST AND DRAMATIC CHANGES THAT HAVE TAKEN  
PLACE IN THE COUNTRY S DEVELOPMENT THE PAST FEW YEARS. HE  
DESCRIBED THE FUTURE OF THE COUNTRY AS VERY GOOD.

PRESIDENT JAWARA SAID HE WAS HAPPY TO HAVE AMBASSADOR BROWN  
RETURN TO THE COUNTRY, AND HIS PARTICIPATION IN THE CERE-  
MONIES ALONG WITH U.S. AMBASSADOR RUDOLPH AGGREY; AND MRS  
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PAGE 02 BANJUL 00132 181641Z

JOHN PROCOPE.

DURING THEIR VISIT THE AMERICAN DELEGATION CARRIED A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT FORD TO PRESIDENT JAWARA FOR WHICH THE GAMBIAN PRESIDENT EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION.

ERNESTA PROCOPE, AS PRESIDENT FORD S SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CELEBRATIONS, IS AN OUTSTANDING LEADER AMONG AMERICAN WOMEN. SHE IS AN INSURANCE BROKER IN NEW YORK, A COMMUNITY LEADER, AND WAS RECENTLY ELECTED TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTERNATIONAL AVON CORPORATION. MRS PROCOPE SAYS SHE IS EXCITED ABOUT THE TRIP AND THE INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS IN THE COUNTRY. WHAT I D LIKE TO DO, SHE SAYS, IS STAY LONGER AND VISIT THE INTERIOR OF THE COUNTRY BUT SHE ADDS, THAT S GOING TO HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL ANOTHER TIME. DURING THE VISITS TO THE FESTIVAL OF ARTS AND CULTURE, MRS PROCOPE SAYS SHE S HAD A CHANCE TO MEET MANY OF THE GAMBIAN WOMEN WHO HAVE VISITED THE U.S., AND THEY HAVE FOUND MUCH TO TALK ABOUT.

AFTER VISITING THE CULTURAL EXHIBITIONS WHICH OPENED IN BANJUL MONDAY, MRS PROCOPE SAID SHE FINDS THE BATIKS AND TIE-DYES FASCINATING, AND SAID SHE THINKS THERE ARE EXCELLENT POSSIBILITIES TO ESTABLISH A GOOD MARKET FOR THEM IN THE U.S. FOR AMERICAN WOMEN.

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